

DRAFT PROPOSAL

6. (Proposed Amendment) A stent, comprising a tubular support frame defining a longitudinal axis and expandable from an initial state to a support state, said support frame including a plurality of ring segments arranged in succession in a direction of the longitudinal axis and formed by struts, which are curved in the initial state in a same circumferential direction and assume a generally linear configuration in the support state, and U-shaped arcuate sections to join the struts to thereby form a wave-like configuration in a circumferential direction of the support frame, wherein adjacent ring segments are linked by first and second connectors which alternate in a same circumferential plane and repeatedly alternate in the direction of the longitudinal axis, wherein successive pairs of a first connector and a second connector alternately respectively connect to a same one of the U-shaped arcuate sections in opposite relationship to one another throughout in a same plane in the direction of the longitudinal axis and which are wherein each of the first and second connectors is formed with a U-shaped compensating section, with the compensating sections of the first and second connectors pointing in a same circumferential direction, wherein the first connectors have, in a direction of the longitudinal axis, a length which is greater than a length of the second connectors and wherein the first connectors have arcuate legs disposed on both sides of the compensating sections, wherein each of the arcuate legs is disposed in a same circumferential plane adjacent to a corresponding one of the struts and curved in the same circumferential plane as the adjacent strut.

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